The Frick Collection

MEMBERS' MAGAZINE SPRING/SUMMER 2016

RECENT ACQUISITION

Gouthière Candelabra

The Frick Collection
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MICHAEL BODYCOMB

Letter from the Director

Art is the heart of The Frick Collection, and while the distinguished residence built by Carrère and Hastings in 1912–14 (and perfectly complemented by John Russell Pope's 1934 addition) provides the setting critical to the visitor's experience, Henry Clay Frick's magnificent collection of paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts was the real impetus for his endowment of the institution. Since Mr. Frick's death, in 1919, the museum has continued to acquire objects of the highest quality, in keeping with Mr. Frick's tradition of collecting only the finest European masterpieces from the Renaissance to the early twentieth century.

Many members may not be aware of how much the collection has grown since Mr. Frick's day. His daughter Helen Clay shared her father's passion for art and, as the chairman of the museum's acquisitions committee for nearly forty years, played a key role in expanding the institution's range, with important acquisitions by Italian Renaissance masters Duccio, Cimabue, and Piero della Francesca. Visitors are often surprised to learn that one of the museum's most recognized and popular works, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's *Comtesse d'Haussonville* (inside back cover), was acquired not by Mr. Frick but by the institution's trustees, in 1927. Countless other works have been added to the collection since, including, in 1991, Jean-Antoine Watteau's *Portal of Valenciennes*, the inspiration for this summer's exhibition *Watteau's Soldiers: Scenes of Military Life in Eighteenth-Century France.*

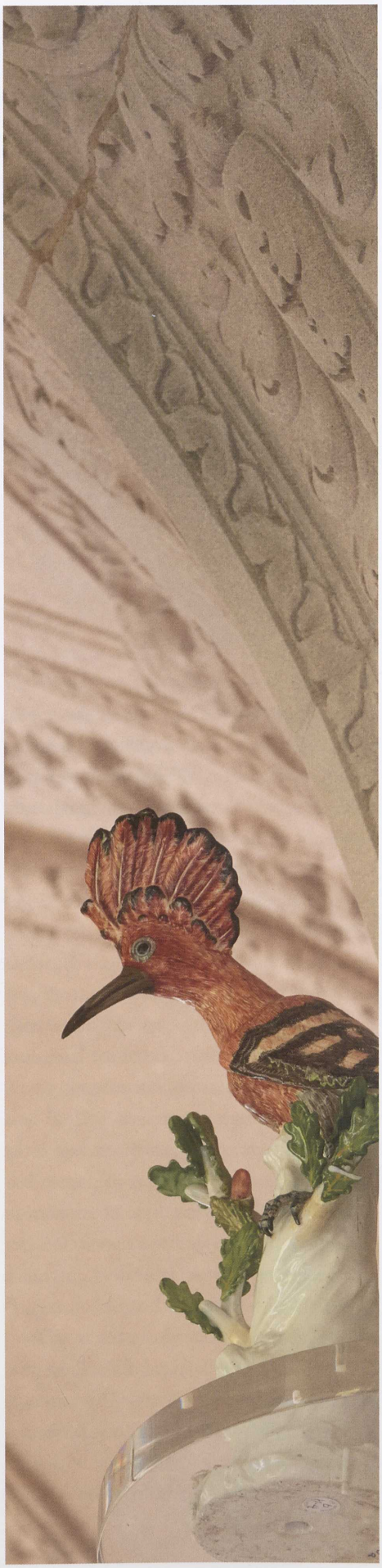
The Frick has also acquired several collections as gifts, beginning with the collection of blue and white Chinese porcelain bequeathed in 1965 by the founder's son, Childs Frick. In 1999, Winthrop Kellogg Edey's collection of early European clocks and watches came to the Frick by bequest, creating a constellation around a bright star, the eighteenth-century French longcase regulator clock purchased by Mr. Frick in 1915. A number of objects from Henry Arnhold's promised gift of Meissen porcelain were formally transferred to the museum just recently and are featured in the exhibition *Porcelain, No Simple Matter: Arlene Shechet and the Arnhold Collection.*

This past year has seen several spectacular additions to the permanent collection. On the cover we feature a pair of candelabra by Pierre Gouthière that were purchased a few months ago with the help of trustee Sidney R. Knafel, who also was instrumental in the acquisition of a rare Saint-Porchaire ewer last year. Continuing a tradition of adding great private holdings to our own, I am delighted to announce a significant gift of portrait medals from the Stephen K. and Janie Woo Scher Collection, the finest private collection of medals in the world. Highlights from this gift will be the focus of a major exhibition next year, as well as a comprehensive catalogue.

I am hugely grateful to these collectors and donors, whose generosity adds to the vitality of the Frick now and for future generations. During your next visit, be sure to keep an eye out for these wonderful additions to the collection.

With all best wishes,

Ian Wardropper
Director



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The Frick Collection

MEMBERS' MAGAZINE SPRING/SUMMER 2016

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Pair of Candelabra, 1782, hard-paste porcelain and marble with gilt-bronze mounts by Pierre Gouthière (1732–1813), after a design by François-Joseph Bélanger (1744–1818), The Frick Collection, gift of Sidney R. Knafel. A detail appears on the back cover. Photograph by Michael Bodycomb

LEFT
Hoopoe on Tree Trunk (one of a pair), 1736, Meissen porcelain, model by Johann Joachim Kändler (1706–1775), promised gift from the Arnhold Collection

RECENT ACQUISITION

Portrait Medals from the Scher Collection

Gift Adds a New Dimension to the Permanent Collection

The Frick Collection is pleased to announce a gift from the Stephen K. and Janie Woo Scher Collection. Considered the world's greatest private collection of portrait medals, the Scher Collection rivals—and in many cases, surpasses—the holdings of portrait medals in major American museums. An initial gift to the Frick of about four hundred and fifty medals is representative of the collection's superb quality and breadth. Dating from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century, the medals represent the evolution and flourishing of the art form in Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and England, among other regions.

The portrait medal, which was invented during the Italian Renaissance, is central to the history of European portraiture from the fifteenth century onward. Less familiar to modern museumgoers than the arts of painting and sculpture, these small-scale objects typically feature a portrait on one side (the obverse) and, on the reverse, an allegorical or emblematic image representing aspects of the sitter's biography, achievements, or beliefs. Commemorating individuals of the highest status and accomplishment, portrait medals disseminated the sitter's power, glory, and identity widely, but, at the same time, intimately. These exquisitely crafted objects were produced in multiples and were small enough to travel easily to places far away from the artist and sitter.

Masters of the medallic arts were often well-known painters and sculptors. Antonio di Puccio Pisano, called Pisanello, one of the most celebrated Italian painters of the fifteenth century, is traditionally credited as the inventor of the portrait medal. His medal of Leonello d'Este (above), like most portraits of the time, emulates ancient Roman coins by presenting the sitter in profile. (Unlike coins, medals were not intended to circulate as currency and thus are not bound to specifications of weight and material.) Allegorical images on the reverse of medals were meant to be interpreted by their collectors. In the case of the Leonello d'Este medal, the reverse depicting two men carrying baskets of olive branches symbolizes the blessings of peace, alluding to the good governance of Leonello, who served as marquis of Ferrara from 1441 to 1450. The inscription on the reverse, OPVS PISANI PICTORIS, declares the medal to be "the work of Pisanello the painter." Obverse portraits could be combined with different reverses, so that an individual could highlight various aspects of his or her persona by commissioning multiple medals. For example, a second medal of Leonello by Pisanello in the Scher Collection depicts on the reverse an allegorical image of a head with three faces; a third shows a lion (a play on Leonello's name) being taught to sing. These have been interpreted to celebrate, respectively, the marquis's prudence in governing and his happy marriage.

The French seventeenth-century artist Guillaume Dupré is among the most celebrated medallists of all time. In addition to making medals, he was also a cannon founder and served as first sculptor to Louis XIII. Dupré advanced the technique of medals casting (pouring molten metal into a mold) to an unparalleled level of refinement and detail. In his medal of Louis XIII (opposite page, top left), which features on the reverse a portrait of the king's wife, Anne of Austria (opposite page, far right), the artist captures

THIS PAGE
Antonio di Puccio Pisano, called Pisanello, (ca. 1395–ca. 1455), *Leonello d'Este* (obverse and reverse), ca. 1445, bronze. *All objects illustrated are from the Stephen K. and Janie Woo Scher Collection.*

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP
Guillaume Dupré (1574 or 1576–1643), *Louis XIII* (obverse and reverse), 1620, bronze

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM
Unknown artist, *Coronation of William and Mary* (obverse and reverse), 1689, silver

with breathtaking detail the king's ruff, the queen's standing lace collar and jewels, and their distinctively styled hair. This example, like Dupré's other cast medals, approaches the extreme precision achieved through striking, a technique developed primarily for minting coins that requires specialized machinery and physical force. The loop attached to the top of the medal suggests it was suspended for display or perhaps worn by its owner.

Medals were often produced to acknowledge specific events or milestones, such as marriages, deaths, coronations, and military victories. A silver medal depicting the enthroned and crowned William III and Mary II of England (right), celebrates their coronation in Amsterdam in 1689, the date inscribed below the figures. The unknown artist who cast this medal included charming details such as the tassels at the corners of the cushions on which the figures rest their feet and, on the reverse, the plumes adorning the hats of the three members of the City Guard of Amsterdam, whose names are inscribed around the perimeter.

By the seventeenth century, medals were not limited to commemorating only the royal and aristocratic classes. Individuals of sufficient means could purchase ready-made medals depicting a generic event, such as an anniversary or marriage, then personalize them by inscribing their names and biographical details.

The material from which a medal is formed (lead, bronze, silver, or gold) makes it both durable and precious. Combining metals, in particular covering bronze or silver with gold in whole or in part, can achieve dazzling visual effects. In the case of the parcel-gilt bronze medal commemorating the death of George I of England (page 4, top left), the contrast between gold and bronze heightens the sculptural relief of the portrait bust and emphasizes the monumentality of the figure despite the diminutive size of the medal, which is just over one inch in diameter. On the reverse (page 4, top right), an allegorical figure supporting a medallic portrait representing George earlier in his life serves at once to memorialize the late king and to emphasize the importance of the portrait medal as a means of commemoration.

Death is a constant presence in portrait medal imagery. The *memento mori* was for centuries a ubiquitous reminder of the inevitability of death, and medal reverses feature countless representations of the passage of time and impermanence of life, from skulls to hourglasses to children blowing soap bubbles destined to burst. The boldly simple skull and bones on the reverse of a medal inscribed with the name Michael Leonhard Maier (page 4, bottom) is a haunting counterpart to his portrait on the other side. The visual impact of this reverse derives not only from its simplicity, but from its high sculptural relief as well. These common reminders of mortality also emphasize that portrait medals both commemorate and immortalize

their sitters: the sculpted image endures long after the body perishes.

The medallion is a designation given to medals of a distinctly larger size, and the gilt-bronze example depicting the Empress Josephine, the first wife of Napoleon Bonaparte (opposite page), is a tour de force of the kind of modern sculptural portraiture explored extensively by the nineteenth-century French artist Pierre-Jean David d'Angers. Lavishing attention on the decorative details of his regal sitter's adornments, David d'Angers activates her by playing with the conventional profile portrait: the position of her lace collar, neck, and shoulders indicates that she has just turned her face away from the viewer; indeed, her dangling gem-encrusted earring seems still to be swinging just slightly to the right. The medallion was created the year Napoleon Bonaparte became emperor of France.

In many ways, the Frick is the perfect home for the Scher medals, as they cohere seamlessly with Henry Clay Frick's sustained interest in the art of portraiture. The medals also contribute to building a fuller art historical context for the permanent collection's paintings, sculptures, decorative arts, and works on paper. Significantly, the portrait medal's inventor, Pisanello, is represented in the Frick's permanent collection by a mid-fifteenth-century drawing that mirrors the same concentrated visual study he used to capture the likenesses of his portrait medal sitters. Together, Pisanello's drawing and medals demonstrate the range of his interest in depicting the world around him.

The Frick's holdings find poignant and powerful complements and counterpoints in the Scher medals. Portrait medals created for the French court during the sixteenth century enrich the artistic context in which the Frick's superlative collection of Limoges enamels were crafted and displayed. The Frick's painted portraits by Holbein, Titian, and Bronzino are enhanced by comparison to medals made contemporaneously and for the same circles of patrons. For instance, Pietro Aretino, the subject of Titan's great portrait (ca. 1537) acquired by Frick in 1905, commissioned at least five portrait medals during his life; he purposely used both painted and medallic portraiture to circulate his image in order to promote and ingratiate

THIS PAGE, ABOVE
Jean Dassier (1676–1763), *George I* (obverse and reverse), 1727, parcel-gilt bronze

THIS PAGE, RIGHT
Baldwin Drentwett (1545–active until 1627), *Michael Leonhard Maier* (obverse and reverse), 1580, silver

OPPOSITE PAGE
Pierre-Jean David d'Angers (1788–1856), *Empress Josephine Lapagerie Bonaparte*, ca. 1804, gilt bronze

himself to the rulers of Europe. Several sculptors represented in the Frick's permanent collection—including Antico, Bertoldo di Giovanni, Jonghelinck, and Soldani—are also acclaimed medallists represented in the Scher Collection. Uniting the Frick sculptures with the Scher medals sparks new ways of looking at these artists' creative output and the range and complexity of their sculptural invention. Such intersections make clear that the portrait medal played an important (if now less familiar) role in the history of European art.

Dr. Stephen K. Scher, a world-renowned scholar of art history, grew up in New York City. He began collecting portrait medals as a graduate student at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, where he earned his Master's degree. After completing his Ph.D. at Yale University in 1966, he went on to teach art history at Brown University, serving as chairman of the art department from 1972–73. It was during his tenure at Brown that Dr. Scher first met Ian Wardropper, a student in his course on early Netherlandish painting who would go on to become Director of The Frick Collection in 2011. Though it was unknown to them at the time, the relationship between the Schers and the Frick would prove to be a long and rewarding one.

Dr. Scher and his wife, Janie Woo Scher (a chemist and volunteer in the Department of Scientific Research of The Metropolitan Museum of Art) have been longtime supporters of the Frick's exhibitions and educational programs. The Frick has presented two landmark exhibitions on the art of the portrait medal organized with Dr. Scher: *The Currency of Fame* (1994) and *The Proud Republic: Dutch Medals of the Golden Age* (1997). In the decades since, Dr. Scher has given lectures and led numerous seminars and classes at the museum, giving participants the rare opportunity to view and engage with his collection.

The Schers's gift establishes the Frick as a new center for the study of the medallic arts. Since first collaborating with the Frick to present *The Currency of Fame*, Dr. Scher has advanced an approach to the study of medals that insists on their significant place in the history of art. Traditionally viewed as a specialized field closer to numismatics than to fine art, the study of the portrait medal has become, through the work of Dr. Scher and others, a burgeoning area of new scholarship. Dr. Scher's contributions to art history and the gift to the Frick of his and his wife's personal collection embody the commitment to arts education that led Henry Clay Frick to bequeath his residence and art collection to the public, to encourage and develop the study of the fine arts.
—Aimee Ng, Associate Curator

Beginning in May 2017, an exhibition at the Frick featuring selections from the Scher Collection will explore the challenges, complexities, possibilities, and, above all, the intimate beauty and wit of the portrait medal. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue of the entire Scher Collection, which will serve as an essential resource for scholars, students, and curators.

Candelabra by Pierre Gouthière Acquired

The Generous Gift of Trustee Sidney R. Knafel

Pierre Gouthière is arguably one of the greatest artists of the eighteenth century, yet his name is unfamiliar to most. He was neither a painter nor a sculptor, but a master chaser-gilder who transformed utilitarian gilt-bronze objects such as door knobs, firedogs, and candlesticks into opulent *objets d'art* with the appearance of finely worked gold. Gouthière's chasing and gilding techniques were so exceptional that they brought him fame during his lifetime, and his elaborate creations commanded amounts equal to, and sometimes greater than, those asked by the most talented painters and sculptors. His work was highly coveted by the most powerful figures of pre-Revolutionary France, including Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, and Madame Du Barry (Louis XV's mistress).

An exuberant pair of candelabra by Gouthière (right) was recently acquired by The Frick Collection, through the generous gift of Trustee Sidney R. Knafel. Commissioned by the Duke of Aumont, one of the era's most important art collectors, the candelabra perfectly exemplify the technical and artistic excellence reached by Gouthière during the second half of the eighteenth century. The pair makes a wonderful addition to the permanent collection, which holds several masterpieces of French eighteenth-century art, including Jean-Honoré Fragonard's Progress of Love of 1771–72 and a *bleu turquin* marble table (page 8), also with gilt-bronze mounts by Gouthière. The candelabra and table will be included in the first exhibition focusing on Gouthière, which opens at the Frick in November before traveling to the Musée des arts decoratifs in Paris. Presenting thirty works from public and private collections, *Pierre Gouthière: Virtuoso Gilder at the French Court* will shed new light on the artist's production, life, and workshop.

The candelabra are the collaboration of Gouthière and another great French artist of the eighteenth century, the architect François-Joseph Bélanger, who was responsible for their design. Each candelabrum is comprised of a white porcelain vase surmounted by a gadroon frieze and three goat heads that seem to sprout spiraling leaf-covered candleholders. The vases are supported by three pairs of cloven goat hooves, which rest atop white marble bases adorned with gilt-bronze mounts.

Gouthière's extremely detailed chasing lends a naturalistic appearance to the swirling ivy and grape vines decorating the

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THIS PAGE
Pair of Candelabra, 1782, hard-paste porcelain and marble with gilt-bronze mounts by Pierre Gouthière (1732–1813), after a design by François-Joseph Bélanger (1744–1818), The Frick Collection, gift of Sidney R. Knafel

vases' shoulders, as well as to the individual pomegranates, pears, and other fruits that spill from the cornucopias that form each candleholder. At the same time, the rough texture of the goats' ridged horns contrasts with the silky appearance of their wool. The vases' elaborate gilt-bronze mounts exemplify Gouthière's superb chasing, which he achieved by using specialized tools to hammer and incise different patterns and textures into the surface of cast metal, before gilding. His exceptional chasing was embellished by his unique gilding techniques, which included *dorure au mat*, or matte-gilding, a chemical treatment that gives a soft luster to the surface of the gold. Although Gouthière was credited as early as 1810 with inventing this process, he most likely adapted a technique that had been used by silversmiths and goldsmiths since the early eighteenth century. Because the *dorure au mat* technique requires a much thicker layer of gold than standard gilding and is therefore more expensive to produce, it was used only on gilt bronzes intended for the royal family and a few elite clients. On these candelabra, Gouthière's matte gilding can be seen on the goats' heads and on the many leaves of the candleholders, in both instances creating a beautiful contrast with the burnished (shining) gilding of the goats' horns and the candleholders' fruits.

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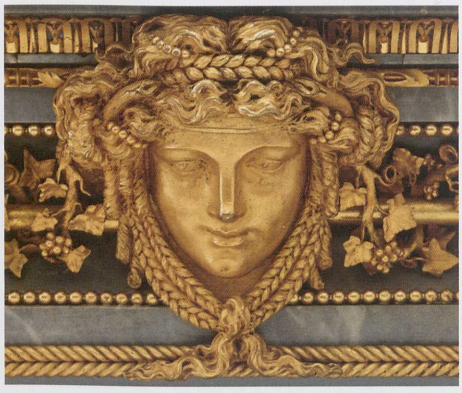

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Side Table, 1781, *bleu turquin* marble with gilt-bronze mounts by Pierre Gouthière; designed by François-Joseph Bélanger and Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin (1739–1811), The Frick Collection. The detail shows the beauty of Gouthière's chasing and gilding techniques.

While little is known of Gouthière's early training, he became a master chaser-gilder in 1758, and by 1765 he was gilding pieces of both bronze and silver for the famous silversmith François-Thomas Germain. In 1767, Louis XV appointed him *doreur seul ordinaire* (gilder to the king), thus initiating his long career in the service of the French court. Gouthière worked at the behest of the Menus-Plaisirs et Affaires de la Chambre du Roi, an administrative body of the royal household, which managed the king's personal effects and organized lavish events for his entertainment, creating sets for theatrical productions and decor for significant state occasions such as marriages and funerals. The artists employed by the Menus-Plaisirs were free to develop new ideas without constraint, and their workshops were the locus for the latest fashions. The Premiers Gentilshommes de la Chambre, who headed the Menus-Plaisirs, were powerful members of the nobility, famous for their luxurious and eccentric lifestyles. The best known among them was Louis-Marie-Augustin, the Duke of Aumont, whose cabinet of curiosities was renowned among connoisseurs for its exquisite antique marbles, mounted porphyry, Asian porcelain, and gilt-bronze objects. The duke was Gouthière's best client; not only did he commission works for himself, but he also encouraged members of his family (including his daughter-in-law,

Louise-Jeanne-Constance d'Aumont, Duchess of Mazarin) to do the same. The duke commissioned the candelabra around 1782, but died before they were completed. Gouthière did, however, finish them in time for the duke's estate sale, which began on December 12, 1782, and lasted for nine days.

Each of the auction's 447 objects, including the candelabra, was described in a sales catalogue written by Philippe-François Julliot, a well-known merchant of luxury goods, and the painter Alexandre-Joseph Paillet. The catalogue specified that "all the works [by Gouthière] are indicated at the end of the entries by the initial letter *G.*" Julliot and Paillet attributed the candelabra (lot 148 in the auction sales catalogue) to Gouthière, noting that the gilt-bronze mounts were of "distinctive refined taste." The candelabra were purchased by the Duke of Aumont's son, Louis-Alexandre-Céleste d'Aumont, Duke of Villequier, for an impressive 1,180 *livres* (an amount equivalent to the annual salary of a successful craftsman working around 1770).

What makes these candelabra so striking is the contrast between Gouthière's elaborate bronzes and the simplicity of the white vases, which Aumont clearly valued highly since he commissioned such expensive mounts for them. Although the vases are listed in the Aumont sale catalogue in the section titled "old white Japanese porcelain," they are described as *ancien blanc de Saxe* (Meissen porcelain). Technical studies are ongoing, but it seems that one vase is indeed Meissen porcelain, made in the early eighteenth century at the royal Meissen manufactory near Dresden, the first European manufactory to produce true porcelain.

Despite his enormous success, Gouthière's extravagant expenditures and a series of financial setbacks—including the huge uncollected sum owed him by Madame Du Barry and the death of Aumont and another important client, the Duchess of Mazarin—forced him to declare bankruptcy in 1787. He worked very little after this and died in poverty on June 8, 1813. Not long after his death, Gouthière was lauded by collectors, critics, and other specialists as one of the most important artists of the period, a fame that has not faded in those circles during subsequent centuries.—*Charlotte Vignon, Curator of Decorative Arts*

The candelabra will be featured along with thirty other works by Gouthière in "Pierre Gouthière: Virtuoso Gilder at the French Court," on view at The Frick Collection November 16, 2016, through February 19, 2017.

Help Enhance The Frick Collection

Donate to the Acquisitions Fund

The Frick's Board of Trustees is pleased to introduce the Acquisitions Fund, established especially to help the museum continue to purchase objects that enhance and complement its holdings for the enjoyment of the public. Acquisitions have a long history at the Frick. Soon after the museum opened in 1935, Henry Clay Frick's daughter Helen wrote to members of the museum's acquisitions committee that "to cease buying works of art unless compelled to do so for financial reasons would be a great detriment to The Frick Collection," and that it "was the intention of the Founder that great works of art should be added from time to time…." Thanks to this far-sighted view, the permanent collection has nearly doubled since Mr. Frick's death through donations of art from private collections and select purchases including well-known and cherished works such as Ingres's *Comtesse d'Haussonville*, Memling's *Portrait of a Man*, Antico's *Hercules*, Constable's *White Horse*, and Houdon's *Diana the Huntress*.

Please consider supporting The Frick Collection in its longstanding commitment to acquiring exceptional works of art by making a donation to the Acquisitions Fund, in addition to your membership gift. Regardless of the amount, your contribution will make a difference.

To support the Acquisitions Fund, please contact Genevra Le Voci at 212.547.6871. You may also make a gift online at frick.org/acquisitions or mail your check to Acquisitions Fund, The Frick Collection, 1 East 70th Street, New York, NY 10021.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION

Porcelain, No Simple Matter

Arlene Shechet and the Arnhold Collection

May 24, 2016, through April 2, 2017

For this special exhibition, The Frick Collection invited New York–based artist Arlene Shechet to select about one hundred eighteenth-century pieces of Meissen porcelain from the renowned collection of Henry Arnhold and install them in the Portico Gallery, along with sixteen of her own porcelain sculptures. Shechet's inventive installation richly extends the context of both the eighteenth-century pieces and her work.

Although porcelain was manufactured in China as early as the seventh century, its production remained a mystery in Europe until 1709, when the alchemist Johann Friedrich Böttger succeeded in producing white porcelain. Until then, porcelain had been known as "white gold," as it was available in Europe only through imports from China and Japan. In 1710, Böttger's patron, August II, elector of Saxony and king of Poland, established a porcelain manufactory in Dresden, the seat of the Saxon court. So determined was he to keep the formula a secret that he relocated his manufactory to the secure clifftop castle of Albrechtsburg in Meissen, fifteen miles outside of Dresden. The Meissen factory has remained there, in continuous production, ever since.

Henry Arnhold's parents, Lisa and Heinrich, began collecting Meissen porcelain in 1926, when they lived in Dresden, acquiring mostly tablewares, vases, and objects of royal or noteworthy provenance. Henry followed in their footsteps, becoming a patron of the arts and an avid Meissen collector.

In a recent interview with exhibition curator Charlotte Vignon and Arlene Shechet, Mr. Arnhold recalled: "By the time we left Germany [in 1937], the Meissen collection was quite substantial. Shortly after I came back from the army after World War II, I got married and started to set up a home. By then, my mother had moved to an apartment in New York, and she was quite happy to share things with both me and one of my sisters who also had moved to New York. I made myself a little collection at home, and when professionals—whether artists, collectors, or museum people—came to see my mother's collection, they also came over to see mine. In the late 1980s, the art historian Maureen Cassidy-Geiger came up with the idea of publishing a catalogue of my collection; and at that point, I became very involved again, a real activist in terms of my collecting. I also took Maureen on trips to what was called Leningrad at the time and to Prague, Florence, Paris, Dresden, and Munich—everywhere. Well, *l'appetit vient en mangeant* [appetite comes with eating]—that's what the French taught me."

Not only does Mr. Arnhold have a great appetite, he also has an unfailing eye—one that guided the acquisition of each of the pieces in his collection, including the objects illustrated below, which are included in the exhibition.

By contrast, Arlene Shechet's interest in Meissen porcelain came completely by chance, when a few years ago the curator and art dealer Peter Nagy, who knew Shechet's work and its relationship with historical material, recommended her for an artist's residency at the Meissen factory. Although Shechet had worked for many years with

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All works illustrated were made at the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory. Unless otherwise indicated, works are on loan from the Arnhold Collection. Those by Arlene Shechet are courtesy of the artist.

THIS PAGE
Exhibition display with Arlene Shechet's *Big Dragon* (bottom, center) and *Three Hundred Years* (far right and far left), juxtaposed with Meissen porcelain, ca. 1725–35

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT
Saucer and Tea Bowl, ca. 1720, decorated outside the Meissen factory, ca. 1745, promised gift from the Arnhold Collection

Freemason Couple Taking Chocolate, model by Johann Joachim Kändler (1706–1775), ca. 1745

Small Two-Handled Bowl with Cover, 1735 or 1738, model by Johann Joachim Kändler and/or Johann Friedrich Eberlein (1696–1749)

clay, she had no previous experience working in porcelain and was excited by the opportunity to explore this very technical medium onsite at the Meissen manufactory. "The allure of spending time inside a functioning factory [was] extremely compelling. As a child in New York, I used to tell my parents there were two things I wanted to be when I grew up: a farmer or a factory worker. Thinking about that in recent years as I work in my studio, I realize that being an artist is, in many ways, like being both a farmer and a factory worker. I'm growing things and generating a vision. I'm not completely in control and am always aware of a process that's bigger than me. As a child, I always wanted to know how things were made or came into being. It was the beginning of figuring out that I needed to be an artist. I'm still deeply interested in the process of how things grow. I grow things in my studio and also in my gardens. I believe art and nature are very aligned."

Made during her residency at Meissen in 2012 and 2013, Shechet's unique compositions reflect her fascination with the process of making porcelain. For example, she created *Mix and Match,* one of the exhibition's featured works, by using eighteenth-century molds from the Meissen archives. Each element of the fanciful sculpture was cast separately then decorated with a different color or pattern. After her first few weeks at Meissen, Shechet realized that the molds were the

THIS PAGE
Installation display with Shechet's *Bug Plate* (2013) and a mounted group (ca. 1728–30), model attributed to George Fritzsche (ca. 1697–1756), with gilt-bronze mounts, probably French, promised gift from the Arnhold Collection

OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT
Fluted Bowl, ca. 1730

Arlene Shechet (b. 1951), *Scallop Bowl,* 2012

core of all the porcelain produced at the factory since the eighteenth century—"almost like the factory's DNA." To communicate this idea in her works, she attempted to link the molds' industrial imagery with the very refined aesthetic of porcelain. To accomplish this, she made molds of the factory's three-hundred-year-old plaster originals then cast them in porcelain, turning industrial objects into fine works of art. The exhibition includes Henry Arnhold's *Fluted Bowl* (opposite page, left) paired with her *Scallop Bowl* (opposite page, right), a mold work that was created by casting the *Fluted Bowl*'s original plaster mold in porcelain. Her fascination with the process of making porcelain can be seen in the visible seams, cracks, and drips that are often found on cast and hand-painted works, as well as her inclusion of the mold's inventory numbers on the surface of her sculptures. Shechet painted and gilded each piece at Meissen according to traditional manufactory techniques, but fused her works with her own language and sensibility as seen in her interpretation (page 11, bottom center) of the painted decoration of Meissen's famous "Red Dragon" service.

Although Shechet's compositions are undeniably linked to eighteenth-century Meissen production through the historic molds and traditional techniques used to create and decorate them, they also differ radically from their earlier counterparts. Since its founding, the Meissen factory has produced pieces that are cast and painted by hand but are produced as unlimited multiples. The artists and craftsmen working in the factory make only minor decisions about the pieces' final appearance, which is predetermined by the existing molds and traditional painting techniques. In contrast, each of Shechet's sculptures is unique, conceived and created entirely by her. However, since Shechet made these sculptures at the Meissen factory, they are all signed with the factory's blue crossed swords, the mark of the Meissen factory since the eighteenth century.

Shechet's installation eschews the typical chronological or thematic order of most installations in favor of a personal approach that opens an intriguing visual and technical

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dialogue between the contemporary and the historical. Her installation is inspired by the domestic setting of The Frick Collection's galleries, which are characterized by a combination of objects, textures, colors, and materials. Shechet turned to objects from the permanent collection when designing the display cases for the installation, taking as her inspiration, for example, the early eighteenth-century French desk by André-Charles Boulle that is currently in the Living Hall. Likewise, the green damask behind the exhibition's display cases evokes the museum's fabric-covered walls.

The exhibition's location in the Portico Gallery, overlooking the museum's historic Fifth Avenue Garden, reflects Shechet's wish to extend the exhibition into the garden while simultaneously bringing the natural world indoors. For this reason, plexiglass was chosen for the two pedestal-tables near the Portico Gallery's floor-to-ceiling windows in order to offer an unobstructed view of the garden. The theme of the exhibition also derives from its location, with the featured pieces selected for their evocations and depictions of nature, an important source of inspiration for artists working at the Meissen factory as well as for Shechet.

The integration of Shechet's work with porcelain from Mr. Arnhold's collection creates a kind of *tableau vivant* in which the objects—figures, cups, teapots, and vases—seem to come to life, a direct reference to the eighteenth-century European concept of animating inanimate objects. The display also references late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European gardens that invited contemplation of art and nature, as well as contemporaneous "porcelain rooms," in which walls were covered with hundreds of pieces of porcelain, often arranged by color. As in these historical settings, surprise and delight are at the core of the installation; look for porcelain birds mounted overhead in the Portico's rotunda and large Meissen animals outside, their stark white a dramatic contrast to the garden's greenery.

The exhibition's title, "Porcelain, No Simple Matter," was chosen by Shechet and is meant as an entreaty to the viewer to look more closely and prepare to be surprised. For Shechet, as for Arnhold, these beautiful objects are not simply dishes or figurines or painted knickknacks—they are carefully considered works of art. By exploring the complex history of the making, collecting, and display of porcelain, the exhibition offers a unique opportunity to reevaluate and reexamine a medium, a *matter*, often taken for granted.—*Charlotte Vignon, Curator of Decorative Arts*

"Porcelain, No Simple Matter: Arlene Shechet and the Arnhold Collection" was organized by Charlotte Vignon, Curator of Decorative Arts, The Frick Collection. Major support for the exhibition is generously provided by Chuck and Deborah Royce, Melinda and Paul Sullivan, Margot and Jerry Bogert, and Monika McLennan.

Ms. Vignon would like to acknowledge Stephen Saitas, Joseph Godla, Patrick King, Arthur Fowler, Adrian Anderson, Chelsea Maruskin, Catherine Feck, Henry McMahon, and Lucas Ruggieri for their help in creating this unique installation.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION

Watteau's Soldiers

Scenes of Military Life in Eighteenth-Century France

July 12 through October 2, 2016

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Most know Jean-Antoine Watteau as a painter of amorous aristocrats and melancholy actors, a dreamer of exquisite parklands and impossibly refined *fêtes*. Few artists would seem further removed from the misery of war. And yet, early in his short career, Watteau created a number of military scenes—about a dozen paintings and some thirty surviving drawings. For the most part, they were executed during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–14), which saw Louis XIV battle almost the whole of Europe in a bid to place his grandson, Philip, Duke of Anjou, on the Spanish throne. However, neither the turmoil of battle nor the suffering that ensued seems to have held much interest for Watteau. Instead, he focused on the prosaic aspects of military life—marches, halts, and encampments. The resulting works show quiet moments between the fighting, outside the regimented discipline of drills and battle, when soldiers could rest and daydream, smoke pipes and play cards. Although these themes are indebted to seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish genre scenes, Watteau's drawings and paintings are set apart by their focus on the common soldier. More than his predecessors, Watteau offers an intimate vision of war, one in which the human element comes to the fore. His soldiers are endowed with an inner life, with subjectivity.

This summer, the Frick will present *Watteau's Soldiers: Scenes of Military Life in Eighteenth-Century France*, the first exhibition devoted to these captivating and little-known works. On display will be four of Watteau's seven surviving military paintings and thirteen red chalk studies, several of which are directly related to the paintings on view. Also included will be works by one of Watteau's predecessors and two of his followers: the Frick's *Calvary Camp* by Philips Wouwerman, a typical example of the seventeenth-century Dutch military paintings after which Watteau modeled his own; a study of a soldier by Jean-Baptiste Pater, from the Fondation Custodia, Paris; and a painting of a military camp by Nicolas Lancret, from a private collection. Together, they shed light on Watteau's unusual working method and distinctive vision.

Unlike most seventeenth- and eighteenth-century artists, Watteau did not proceed methodically from compositional sketches, figural studies, and full-scale models to the final painting. Instead, his process followed the whims of his imagination and the demands of the moment. He began by drawing soldiers from life, many of whom he likely observed at a military encampment near his hometown of Valenciennes, in northeastern France, which he visited in 1710. Favoring natural poses, his drawings are united in their focus on states of absorption and withdrawal. *Three Studies of Resting Soldiers* (above) is a

THIS PAGE
Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684–1721), *Three Studies of Resting Soldiers*, ca. 1713–14, red chalk, École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM
Watteau, *The Portal of Valenciennes*, ca. 1710–11, oil on canvas, The Frick Collection

Watteau, *Three Studies of Soldiers Holding Muskets and Wearing Capes*, ca. 1710, red chalk and stump on cream paper, The Courtauld Institute Galleries, London

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THE SAMUEL COURTAULD TRUST, THE COURTAULD GALLERY, LONDON

prime example. Most likely depicting a single model, this magnificent sheet shows a soldier lying flat on his belly, another sprawled on his back, and a third propping himself up with his left arm as he looks dreamily into the distance. With striking naturalism, Watteau captures a succession of fleeting private moments at the margins of battle, moments of retreat into reverie and reflection.

In this and other drawings featured in the exhibition, Watteau lavishes a rare attention and care on a subject that, at the time, was regarded as mundane or even lowly. Nonetheless, the viewer is kept at a distance. Nothing about the soldiers' faces or bodies hints at their thoughts or emotions; nothing gives us access to their state of mind. While the poses and attitudes of the soldiers

indicate their immersion in their inner lives, the contours and contents of that life are frustratingly inaccessible. Ultimately, they are closed off within the shells of their bodies, opaque and unknowable.

Whereas most painters of his time posed and sketched figures according to their role in an already worked-out composition, Watteau made his drawings without a specific end in mind. His studies provided him with a stable of figures that he would later arrange on the canvas. As a consequence, figures previously isolated in his sketchbook were brought together and juxtaposed in new social relationships. Watteau's working method generated unusual effects, resulting in connections between individuals that are not entirely resolved. For example, despite their physical proximity, sometimes the soldiers appear to look down or off into the distance, lost in reflection. Other times, even when they face each other, it is not at all clear that they interact in meaningful ways. This often lends Watteau's scenes a dreamlike ambiguity and mystery.

The Frick Collection's *Portal of Valenciennes* (page 15, top) and a related drawing, *Three Studies of Soldiers Holding Muskets and Wearing Capes* (page 15, bottom)—shown together for the first time in this exhibition—are a case in point. In composing the painting, Watteau used the central figure in the drawing as the basis for the soldier on the far left of the canvas. In this new context, the man now faces another soldier, but the remnants of his previous isolation on the page persist. Because the figures were not originally drawn or conceived as engaging with each other, their gazes do not quite meet. What appears on first inspection to be a scene of conviviality (if not quite *esprit de corps*) gives way to a series of failed

THIS PAGE
Watteau, *The Halt*, ca. 1710, oil on canvas, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

OPPOSITE PAGE
Watteau, *Three Studies of a Soldier and a Kneeling Man*, ca. 1710, red chalk, École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris

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connections, a vision of uneasy and troubled social commerce.

The situation is similar in a second Watteau painting featured in the exhibition, *The Halt* (opposite page). Here the figures are connected by a network of gazes: an officer in red, on the left, glares at the man tending to his horse, while an elegantly dressed woman in yellow, perhaps his wife (wives were a common sight in military camps of the day), looks in the direction of the woman next to her. At the same time, the soldier with his arm in a sling, leaning against the tree, stares across the canvas at the pair of women, while soldiers on either side look down at nothing in particular. On the far right, another soldier looks down at the man lying at his feet. Various groups of conversing individuals populate the background, rounding out a scene brimming with apparent companionship and community. Yet a closer look shows that this scene is a more troubled social landscape than it first appears. Many of the figures, such as the man resting his head on his hand to the left of the tree, seem lost in their own world; even when one figure looks toward another, it is not clear that the gaze is returned or that a real connection has been made. An obvious case is the soldier on the far right looking down at the man with his head in his arms; the soldier with the sling looking toward the women also fails to connect with them. Even the gazes of the two women do not quite meet.

The figures' lack of connection is the direct result of Watteau's working method. Rather than being conceived as elements of a coherent, pre-determined composition, the figures in *The Halt* were executed as independent and unrelated studies—one of which, *Three Studies of a Soldier and a Kneeling Man* (above) also appears in the exhibition. Atypically, Watteau used all four figures from this drawing in his painting, although he separated and rearranged them on the canvas. For instance, the two men on the left in the drawing seem to be staring at each other, engaging in some kind of silent dialogue. In the painting, however, the crouching man is now shown looking up at the officer in red (left), leaving the other soldier (in the middle of the composition, to the right of the tree) staring into space. Watteau's process preserves the sense of opacity we observe in his studies. The drawings served as building blocks for a whole architecture of irresolution and ambiguity.

What is the significance of Watteau's vision? Cleary, his military paintings are not documentary transcriptions of soldiers' lives, but rather scenes constructed with patent artifice. Though at first glance picturesque, the works can be seen as making a larger point about the way in which people relate to each other, about the connections that hold society together. Watteau seems to have understood that the absence of traditional familial and social bonds in times of war, coupled with the sheer struggle for survival, raise profound questions about how people connect. In this way, his military scenes convey the essentially modern insight that society is held together by the thinnest of threads, that our connections are menaced by mutual incomprehension and estrangement. At the same time, the paintings' acknowledgment that, despite this, the very existence of society depends on our forging ahead, gives them a poignancy that resonates today.—*Aaron Wile, Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow*

"Watteau's Soldiers: Scenes of Military Life in Eighteenth-Century France" was organized by Aaron Wile, Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow, The Frick Collection. Principal support is provided by an anonymous gift in memory of Melvin R. Seiden. Major support for the exhibition is also provided by the David L. Klein, Jr. Foundation, Sally and Howard Lepow, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and Aso O. Tavitian, with an additional contribution from Susannah Hunnewell Weiss. The catalogue is made possible by The Versailles Foundation, Inc.

Frick Event Highlights

From Spring Garden Party to Ghetto Film School Dinner

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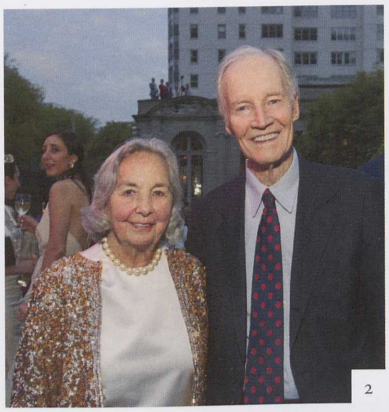

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTINE A. BUTLER AND BFA

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More than seven hundred guests gathered for the Spring Garden Party to celebrate the opening of *Porcelain, No Simple Matter: Arlene Shechet and the Arnhold Collection.* The event, on May 23, recognized Fellows for their generous support of the museum and library. Events earlier in the year included a dinner in January hosted by Ian Wardropper for members of the Director's Circle, and the annual Young Fellows Ball in March, which raised nearly $300,000 for the museum's education program. Chairmen and members of the Young Fellows Steering Committee wore dresses by Carolina Herrera New York, the evening's sponsor.

In February, the Frick hosted a dinner for students from one of its many partner schools, the Ghetto Film School in the Bronx, the country's first public high school dedicated to the art of filmmaking. Before dinner, guests were treated to a screening of the short film shot by students at the Frick last August.

Spring Garden Party 1. Fellows and their guests in the Fifth Avenue Garden 2. Joyce Cowin and Philip Buckner 3. Saheer Mathrani and Ayesha Bulchandani-Mathrani 4. Ron Chernow, Elise Cheng, Alexandra Truitt, and Arlene Shechet 5. Paul Arnhold, Henry Arnhold, and Julia Arnhold 6. Betty Eveillard, Inge Reist, and Rob Freeman 7. Adela Goldsmith and Robert Goldsmith 8. Adam Eaker, Stijn Alsteens, Beatrice Bianca Bertoli, Davide Stefanacci, and Ronnie West 9. Chuck and Deborah Royce 10. Arlene Shechet, Henry Arnhold, and Melinda Sullivan 11. Kate Reibel, Sarah McNear, and Margot Bogert

Director's Circle Dinner 12. Ian Wardropper, Aimee Ng, Steve and Christine Schwarzman 13. Barbara Fleischman and Paul Sullivan

Young Fellows Ball 14. Joann Pailey, Lisa Volling, Amory McAndrew, Sloan Overstrom, Rickie De Sole, and Elizabeth Kurpis 15. Laura Avnius, Akhurapa Ambak, and Emily Santos 16. Michael Parker, Eaddy Kiernan, and Lacy Kiernan

Ghetto Film School Dinner 17. Students from the Ghetto Film School with (back row, left to right) Joe Hall, Sarah Jones, Xavier F. Salomon, David O. Russell, Agnes Gund, Ian Wardropper, and Spike Jonze (front row, far right)

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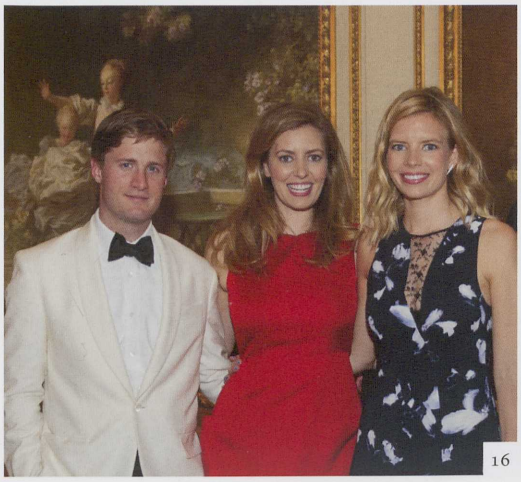
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Please visit our Web site at frick.org to see a complete listing of current programs as well as upcoming events for the fall.

Free Nights

Celebrate the summer with free evening hours and programs inspired by our special exhibitions. Enjoy gallery talks, performances, sketching, and more. For details, visit frick.org/nights.

Fridays, June 24, July 15, and August 5
6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Summer Lecture

Free; seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. Selected lectures are webcast live and archived for future viewing on our Web site; visit frick.org/live for details.

Wednesday, July 13, 6:00 p.m.
Watteau: Making as Meaning
Aaron Wile, Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow, The Frick Collection

Studio

Artists and visitors of all skill levels are invited to sketch paintings, sculptures, architectural details, and decorative arts in selected galleries. Materials are provided.

Wednesdays in July, 5:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday Night Sketch
Free admission is included, but online registration is required. To register, please visit frick.org/studio.

Sundays, July 10 and July 24
Sunday Sketch
Drop in any time between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m.
Free with museum admission, or arrive early to gain entry during Sunday "pay what you wish" hours, between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Salon Evening

Inspired by the Frick's special exhibitions, Salon Evenings feature performances of music, dance, and drama, as well as discussions with artists, writers, and scholars. Purchase tickets online at frick.org/salon; $40, $35 for members.

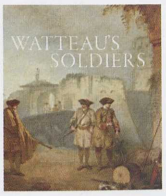
Saturday, September 17, 7:00 p.m.
Scenes of Military Life in Text and Image
Actors perform a series of staged readings that reveal the inner lives of soldiers on and off the battlefield. *Presented in collaboration with the Juilliard Drama Division and in conjunction with "Watteau's Soldiers: Scenes of Military Life in Eighteenth-Century France."*

Student Programs

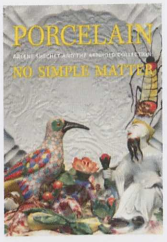
During the month of July, The Frick Collection will offer free after-hours programming for high school students, college students, and recent graduates. Visit frick.org/students for more information.

MUSEUM SHOP

The Museum Shop offers a wide selection of Collection-inspired gifts in addition to exhibition catalogues, books, and prints. *Members always receive a 10 percent discount.*



Watteau's Soldiers
112 pages
Hardcover, $39.95
Softcover, $22.95



Porcelain: No Simple Matter
32 pages
Softcover, $10.95

Limoges Enamels
80 pages
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Support the Frick through Planned Giving

One Member's Inspiring Legacy

In March, The Frick Collection received a generous bequest from John A. Torson, a longtime dual member who passed away last year. Mr. Torson's nephew, Matthew Smith, says Mr. Torson "introduced him to the world of color" when he first brought him to the Frick as a young boy. An art dealer and a proud New Yorker for more than sixty years, Mr. Torson "loved New York City like no other, and his passion for the Big Apple was due to the unrivaled dedication and support of the arts that [the Frick] embodies each and every day."

Mr. Torson understood the importance of how one's life can be enriched by the arts, and his gift helps to ensure that the Frick continues to inspire the next generation. Please consider following his example by becoming part of a rich heritage of planned giving that dates back to the museum's founder more than a century ago.

For confidential help or information about different ways to include the Frick in your estate plans, please contact David W. Martin at 212.991.5770 or martind@frick.org.

The Frick Collection

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Collection Hours

10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sundays; closed Mondays and holidays

Admission

Members receive unlimited free admission to The Frick Collection. Adults, $22; $17 for seniors; $12 for students; on Sundays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., visitors are invited to pay what they wish. Children under ten are not admitted.

Membership

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The Museum Shop

The Museum Shop is open during regular Collection hours. You may also purchase items online at frick.org or by telephone at 212.547.6848.

Frick Art Reference Library

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Library Hours

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday; 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturdays. Closed Sundays, holiday weekends, and Mondays and Saturdays in August. The Library is open to all researchers free of charge.

Visit our Web site at **frick.org**.

MICHAEL BODYCOMB

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867), detail of *Comtesse d'Haussonville*, 1845, oil on canvas, The Frick Collection

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Watteau's Soldiers: Scenes of Military Life in Eighteenth-Century France • July 12 through October 2, 2016